

Beyond the Pale of the Law...

By H. A. BRUCE

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When the news was brought to me, Jasper Matheson, that I had inherited a goodly sum from Miss Rebecca Ainsworth, I could not help breathing a sigh of relief. Death had at last loosed my tongue, enabling me to make public the facts concerning a mystery of years long ago.

One May morning some thirty years ago Henry Ainsworth, the wealthy antiquary, was found foully done to death in his bed. There were living in the house at the time three persons besides the victim—Rebecca Ainsworth, the antiquary's maiden sister, a spinster of fifty years; an old butler and a maid servant. As a professional detective my first care was to interrogate these carefully.

Neither of the servants had heard a sound on the night of the murder. Both had retired at 11 o'clock, about an hour after the master of the house had sought his couch, and both had slept peacefully until 6 o'clock, when they had been awakened by a shriek from Miss Ainsworth.

That lady testified that she and her brother had remained in the library until 10 o'clock. At that hour her brother had gone to his room, and they went to their rooms. Miss Ainsworth further informed me that she had slept until nearly 6 o'clock, when, as was her custom, she dressed and went to knock on her brother's door, for he also was an early riser. Rapping two or three times and receiving no reply, she opened the door and was so alarmed at what she saw that she uttered the cry which startled the servants.

Mr. Ainsworth had been stabbed by a dagger, one of a set of oriental weapons he had collected while on a tour of the east. The murderer must have been in the library to have obtained it, and to the library we accordingly went. It was a high, oak paneled chamber, only called a library by courtesy.

There were a few books in evidence, but most of the space was filled with wonderful and curious objects. On a small table in an alcove were several skulls labeled and ticketed, marking every stage in evolution, from the cranium of a Patagonian to that of a famous scholar. The oaken walls were covered with weapons, primitive, medieval and modern. Ranged under a lofty mantle stood four caskets containing mummies from Egypt. Images from Hindoo, Aztec, Burmese and Chinese temples were scattered about the room.

What especially impressed me was an image about four feet and a half high, apparently of some dull bronze marble. Its hands were folded placidly on its breast, but the features formed a terrible contrast to the repose of the figure. The eyes were wide open and bore an expression of intense hate. The upper lip was raised in a snarling fashion, disclosing fanglike teeth. The nostrils were dilated. One could not repress a shudder while gazing on this silent statue.

Miss Ainsworth informed me that it was not really a statue, as I had supposed, but a petrified man, the body of an old Hindoo fakir unearthed by her brother while engaged on some excavations in India. The antiquary had told her that he had smuggled it out of the country, as the natives venerated it as a god and had threatened his life if he disturbed it.

Wilkie Collins' story of "The Moonstone" flashed into my mind as I heard this. At once I formed the theory that possibly some superstitious Hindoo had murdered the antiquary, the object being to recover the petrified man and take him back to India.

An interesting piece of information volunteered by Miss Ainsworth, who told me that about 8 o'clock the morning after the murder she had entered the library and had observed a smear of blood on the mouth of the image. Neither of the two windows in the library had been found open, and the door was shut as usual.

At Miss Ainsworth's solicitation I went to sleep in the house. After this dinner in the evening I made my way to the library, where I enjoyed a perusal of the books and spent two hours examining the curios.

I was about to go to my room when I was startled by hearing a low, hissing noise, like a long drawn sigh. The sound seemed to come from the image, and I at once conceived the idea that this was hollow and that a man might be hidden in it. I tried to move the image, but it was too heavy. The thought of a secret entrance into the room then came into my mind, and I tapped all over the panneling, but everything sounded true. Baffled, I stood in the center of the room and gazed slowly around.

While not superstitious, I confess I had experienced an uneasy feeling as I stood in that silent chamber. I was convinced that the key to the riddle of Henry Ainsworth's death was concealed in the room, and I decided that it was my duty to spend the night there and to keep wide awake.

Before me stood the shriveled form of the petrified Hindoo, quick with the breath of life, his eyes alight and a knife in his upraised hand. In that moment I held the solution of the Ainsworth mystery. Self hypnotized, the fakir had outdone the marvels of his occult brethren of the east and had been asleep for centuries only to awake to murder.

This came to me in a flash of intuition, for ere I could rise to defend myself I felt a keen stinging in my shoulder and fell to the floor unconscious.

I came out of this swoon to find myself in bed, with the village doctor and Miss Ainsworth by my side. I then learned that I had sustained a flesh wound only. Concerning the manner of my injury I maintained a discreet silence, for I felt that my story would not be believed.

When able to dress I descended to the library, where the domestics were setting things to right under the supervision of Miss Ainsworth. Not a sign of life could I detect in the Hindoo fakir, though there was a smear of blood on his hideous mouth. I tapped him gently, and a metallic ring was the reply. Clearly he was able to maintain his petrified condition.

As soon as the servants left the room I told Miss Ainsworth my experiences during the night. As I had expected, she was at first incredulous, but I succeeded at length in convincing her of the truth of my statements. When I assured her that with the passing of the petrified man all danger would be at an end and showed her how the murderer of her brother was beyond the pale of the law she gave her consent to summary vengeance.

That night the petrified man, carefully packed in a lead weighted box, reposed at the bottom of the lake on the shores of which stood the Ainsworth home, and I must confess that not one scruple did I have in thus acting as the judge, jury and executioner of the antiquary's slayer.

Max Muller's Honesty.

Speaking once of languages to Max Muller, a woman of India, herself a scholar, asked how many he knew.

"I hope I know my mother tongue," he replied. "I am acquainted with a few others."

"Why this caution?" laughed the lady.

"I will tell you," said the great Sanskrit scholar. "There came to me one day as I sat here in my study, the Buddha on my hearth, a man who seemed my ideal of the Sanskrit priest-hood. He spoke to me in an unknown tongue. I asked him what language he was speaking."

"The man huddled himself together on the floor and wept."

"I have honored you all my life," said he, "as the greatest living Sanskrit scholar in all the world. I speak to you a simple Sanskrit salutation, and you do not understand me."

"Since then," said Professor Muller, "I never say that I know any language."

It was merely the difference between the spoken and the written dead tongue that had puzzled him. But that takes nothing from the humility of the linguist, a humility as refreshing as it is rare and scarcely the mark of the age to which Professor Muller belonged.

The Ticket She Couldn't Cash.

A handsomely gowned woman stepped up to the box office of a Broadway theater one night last week and deposited three tickets on the window ledge.

"One of our party disappointed us," she said. "Would you kindly take back one of these tickets?"

"Certainly," replied the obliging treasurer, slipping the ticket into the rack and glancing up expectantly at the next purchaser in the line. The woman tapped her gloved fingers impatiently on the window ledge.

"Well?" inquired the treasurer. "My money, if you please."

A cynical smile stole over the treasurer's face. "Then you didn't understand that those tickets were complimentary," he said.

Just a suspicion of a flush suggested that the woman had understood, and she moved away murmuring "Really?"

There had been a wee circle punched in the ticket, and the treasurer said he knew well enough what that circle meant. It was the trade mark of the theater's complimentary tickets, and the woman had been coming in on the same sort of tickets for two seasons.

An Argument.

"I heard you snoring upstairs," "Upstairs? Impossible. You heard me downstairs."

"I say I heard you upstairs," "I say you heard me downstairs. I slept downstairs."

"True, but I heard you upstairs," "How on earth could you hear me upstairs when I was snoring downstairs?"

"Because I happened to be upstairs and heard you."

"Then why don't you say that when you were upstairs you heard me snoring downstairs?"

"But I can't. I did not hear you downstairs. I heard you upstairs."

"Then put it this way just to please me and end the dispute, I upstairs heard you snoring when you were sleeping downstairs. Is there any objection to that?"

"When you were sleeping downstairs and I was upstairs I heard you,"—New York Press.

A Case in Point.

"It is pathetic," he said in a sentimental tone, "to see the way in which people cling to ideals in spite of disappointment."

"Yes, Charlie, dear," answered young Mrs. Torkins, "especially when the ideal is a race horse."—Washington Star.

ALWAYS INSIST UPON HAVING THE GENUINE

MURRAY & LANMAN'S FLORIDA WATER

THE MOST REFRESHING AND DELICIOUS PERFUME FOR THE HANDKERCHIEF, TOILET AND BATH.

(Chancery A-100)

SHERIFF'S SALE.—In Chancery of New Jersey. Between Emily S. Shultz, Jr., et al., complainants, and Howard J. Van Doren, et al., defendants. Pl. fa. for sale of mortgaged premises.

By virtue of the above stated writ of fieri facias to me directed, I shall expose for sale by public vendue, at the Court House in Newark on Tuesday, the twenty-second day of September next, at two o'clock P. M., all those tracts or parcels of land and premises situate, lying and being in the township of Bloomfield, Essex County, New Jersey.

First Tract.—Beginning on the southeasterly corner of John D. Maxwell's land in the line of Newark avenue; thence running (1) in a southeasterly direction along said Maxwell's line eighty feet to the line of Henry Richards; thence (2) northeasterly along said Richards' line eighty feet to Newark avenue; thence (3) along said Newark avenue sixty-two feet to the place of beginning. Being the same premises conveyed to J. Frank Fort by the Sheriff of Essex County under the decree of the Court of Chancery in a suit wherein Henry Hamilton was complainant and Patrick McGrain was defendant and to said John F. Maxwell by deed recorded in U. S. 21 of books for said Essex County on pages 488 and 489.

Second Tract.—Also all those tracts or parcels of land and premises in said township of Bloomfield, and contiguous to the last above described land, described as follows: Beginning on the rear or northeast corner of property belonging to Mrs. Caroline D. Davis, wife of Dr. Joseph A. Davis, and situate on Frank Fort's street, and thence running (1) along the line of said land of Davis, and thence (2) along the line of said land of Davis, and thence (3) along the line of said land of Davis, and thence (4) along the line of said land of Davis, and thence (5) along the line of said land of Davis, and thence (6) along the line of said land of Davis, and thence (7) along the line of said land of Davis, and thence (8) along the line of said land of Davis, and thence (9) along the line of said land of Davis, and thence (10) along the line of said land of Davis, and thence (11) along the line of said land of Davis, and thence (12) along the line of said land of Davis, and thence (13) along the line of said land of Davis, and thence (14) along the line of said land of Davis, and thence (15) along the line of said land of Davis, and thence (16) along the line of said land of Davis, and thence (17) along the line of said land of Davis, and thence (18) along the line of said 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